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BLOOM BUYING BOOM

by
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SPECIAL in this issue

BLOOM BUYING BOOM

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Isaac E. Lemon 1/

The value of U.S. imports of fresh cut flowers and buds nearly doubled to more than $1.7 million in 1969/70 from $0.9 million a year earlier (table 5). 2/ Our cut flower imports have risen steadily from only $97,000 in 1963/64, when they represented 0.7 percent of total U.S. imports of nursery and greenhouse stock. The share rose to 9 percent in 1969/70. The jump in U.S. purchases of fresh foreign blooms the past few years is a significant development in our nursery and greenhouse stock trade.

In 1969/70, we imported cut flowers from 21 countries representing all continents except Africa. Canada, replacing Ecuador as the leading source, supplied nearly two-fifths of the total. Ecuador, Colombia, Australia, and the Netherlands furnished over half. Cut flower imports from Australia, the leading supplier in 1965/66 and 1966/67, moved up from $121,000 in 1965/66 to $170,000 in 1969/70. Meanwhile, purchases from Canada advanced from $26,000 to $638,000.

U.S. imports of all nursery and greenhouse stock (including cut flowers) in 1969/70 totaled $18.9 million, up nearly 15 percent from the previous year. Bulbs, roots, and corms (tulips, hyacinths, narcissi, gladioli, lilies, crocuses, irises, lilies of the valley, begonias, and related plant materials) accounted for a large but steadily declining share of the total -- 86 percent in 1969/70, compared with 96 percent in 1961/62. Tulips and hyacinths led the bulb imports, accounting for 38 percent and 13 percent, respectively, of total U.S. bulb imports in 1969/70. The remaining imports included relatively small quantities of fruit stocks, orchid plants, rose stocks and plants, and miscellaneous live plants for planting.

The Netherlands supplied four-fifths of all U.S. imports of bulbs, roots, and corms in 1969/70 with Canada, Belgium-Luxembourg, and Japan each providing 5 percent. The Netherlands provided virtually all of the imports in seven of the 10 bulb categories. In the case of begonia tubers, shipments from Belgium-Luxembourg nearly equaled those from the Netherlands. West Germany shipped nearly two-thirds of the lily of the valley pips, while Japan supplied four-fifths of the lily bulbs.

Canada supplied nearly all of our 1969/70 imports of fruit tree stocks and rose plants as well as nearly half of all other live plants for planting. Japan and the Netherlands also furnished sizable quantities of other live plants. Three-fifths of our orchid plant inshipments came from France, with Brazil, the United Kingdom, and Thailand supplying moderate amounts.

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2/ For fiscal 1962-68 data, see Foreign Agricultural Trade of the United States, April 1969.

In 1961/62, U.S. imports of nursery and greenhouse stock and cut flowers, valued at $14.2 million, together with exports worth $6.1 million produced total nursery stock trade of $20.3 million. By 1969/70, the value of trade had advanced to $18.9 million of imports, $8.3 million of exports, and a total of $27.2 million. Our foreign trade in nursery stock in 1969/70 represented about one-fourth of 1 percent of total U.S. foreign agricultural trade.

U.S. exports of such goods in 1961/62 equaled 43 percent of the value of similar imports. By 1969/70, with exports and imports both advancing at about the same average rate, exports valued at $8.3 million represented 44 percent of the value of imports. Exports in 1969/70 were off one-fifth from the 1966/67 peak (table 6).

U.S. exports of cut flowers fell abruptly to $1.1 million in 1969/70 from $2.1 million the previous year. Thus, the nearly $1 million decline in exports somewhat exceeded the $0.8 million gain in imports of fresh cut buds and blooms. Exports of foliage, shrubs, and bushes totaled $680,000, down 22 percent. U.S. shipments of bulbs, roots, and corms -- decreasing for the third consecutive year -- totaled $1.1 million, compared with the record $2.2 million 3 years earlier. Exports of herbaceous plants and the basket category of miscellaneous "other" nursery stock declined about 12 percent. In contrast to the other categories, outshipments of rose plants climbed to $871,000 from 1968/69's $687,000. As usual, Canada was the recipient of nearly all of the rose stocks, with Mexico -- the next best customer -- taking less than 3 percent of the total value.

Canada, the principal customer for all categories of U.S. nursery and greenhouse stock except bulbs, has taken about one-half of U.S. shipments in recent years. In 1969/70, Canada purchased 93 percent of U.S. rose stock exports, 67 percent of the cut flowers, 48 percent of the herbaceous plants, 36 percent of the foliage and shrubs, 20 percent of the bulbs, and 41 percent of all other nursery and greenhouse stock, Other leading buyers include the Netherlands and the United Kingdom for bulbs; Italy, Bermuda, and the Bahamas for cut flowers and buds; West Germany and Mexico for foliage, shrubs, and herbaceous plants; and the Bahamas, Mexico, Colombia, and West Germany for other nursery stock.

Table 5.--U.S. imports of nursery and greenhouse stock, by countries, fiscal years 1966-70

Commodity by country	1965/66	1966/67	1967/68	1968/69	1969/70
	-- 1,000 dollars --				
Total	14,024	15,291	15,322	16,532	18,930
Netherlands	10,932	12,078	11,847	12,614	13,747
Canada	535	506	712	1,139	1,957
Belgium-Luxembourg	1,006	1,175	848	843	822
Japan	817	709	740	722	870
Ecuador	61	79	183	257	337
Colombia	14	36	69	75	292
France	136	147	171	170	251
Australia	121	133	149	170	181
South Africa	105	184	170	176	125
West Germany	70	74	115	64	58
Italy	62	34	45	49	51
Other countries	165	136	273	253	239
Bulbs, roots, and corms	13,182	14,393	14,059	14,870	16,323
Tulip bulbs	5,359	5,926	5,620	5,789	6,185
Netherlands	4,991	5,711	5,313	5,494	5,808
Japan	333	193	273	266	281
France	2	1	5	1	76
Denmark	12	17	11	13	17
Italy	9	---	4	4	2
Other countries	12	4	14	11	1
Hyacinth bulbs	1,547	1,675	1,750	1,973	2,105
Netherlands	1,540	1,668	1,738	1,959	2,077
France	3	4	4	3	25
Japan	3	1	1	2	3
Other countries	1	2	7	9	1/
Narcissus bulbs	1,131	1,314	1,236	1,342	1,478
Netherlands	1,066	1,249	1,169	1,269	1,376
France	20	24	27	24	46
Italy	26	26	26	32	36
Japan	7	9	7	10	10
Canada	9	4	4	4	8
Other countries	3	2	3	3	2
Gladiolus bulbs	1,037	885	956	1,025	1,351
Netherlands	824	834	869	966	1,227
Japan	22	18	14	13	49
Belgium-Luxembourg	23	19	4	3	34
Costa Rica	17	10	27	31	31
Canada	139	3	7	6	10
Other countries	12	1	35	6	---
Begonia tubers	1,145	1,411	1,115	1,092	1,086
Netherlands	370	426	417	452	570
Belgium-Luxembourg	773	970	663	636	514
United Kingdom	1/	1	1	1	1
West Germany	1	1	25	---	---
Other countries	1	13	9	3	1
Crocus corms	446	548	514	564	602
Netherlands	443	546	508	558	578

Continued--

Table 5.--U.S. imports of nursery and greenhouse stock, by countries, fiscal years 1966-70--Continued

Commodity by country	1965/66	1966/67	1967/68	1968/69	1969/70
	-- 1,000 dollars --				
Bulbs, roots, and corms--Continued:					
Crocus corms--Continued:					
Japan	---	1	4	3	15
France	2	---	1	---	9
Other countries	1	1	1	3	---
Lily bulbs	315	331	288	278	325
Japan	227	243	215	208	259
Netherlands	67	69	54	45	48
France	17	17	17	19	16
Italy	2	1	1	1	1
Canada	1	---	---	3	1
Other countries	1	1	1	2	---
Iris bulbs	271	241	311	221	309
Netherlands	250	221	292	213	303
Japan	18	19	9	8	5
Other countries	3	1	10	1/	1
Lily of the valley pips	68	81	79	67	90
West Germany	54	68	60	50	51
Netherlands	13	11	17	15	28
Japan	1	2	2	2	11
Other bulbs, roots, clumps, etc.	1,863	1,981	2,190	2,519	2,792
Netherlands	1,150	1,150	1,243	1,375	1,402
Canada	194	294	384	554	800
Belgium-Luxembourg	208	184	175	199	270
South Africa	96	171	169	176	125
Japan	132	128	132	154	124
Denmark	19	21	12	17	23
Italy	12	5	13	5	11
Australia	---	1/	---	7	9
Peru	1	1	---	12	6
India	5	6	3	5	5
West Germany	1	1	5	1	4
Guatemala	4	7	15	5	4
Turkey	3	3	8	5	4
France	5	2	1	3	2
Israel	25	4	---	---	---
Other countries	8	4	30	1	3
Fruit tree cuttings, seedlings, etc.	79	83	73	51	39
Canada	75	76	65	45	38
United Kingdom	2	2	6	4	---
Other countries	2	5	2	2	1
Fruit tree cuttings, grafted, etc.	20	43	26	44	60
Canada	18	43	23	32	57
New Zealand	---	---	---	10	2
Other countries	2	1/	3	2	1
Rose stocks and plants	18	16	19	14	36
Canada	---	1/	3	11	33

Continued--

Table 5.--U.S. imports of nursery and greenhouse stock, by countries, fiscal years 1966-70--Continued

Commodity and country	1965/66	1966/67	1967/68	1968/69	1969/70
	-- 1,000 dollars --				
Rose stocks and plants--Continued:					
Netherlands	18	15	14	3	3
Other countries	---	1	2	---	---
Orchid plants	91	110	105	120	77
France	65	82	83	81	46
Brazil	4	7	7	5	6
United Kingdom	6	1	2	5	6
Thailand	7	6	2	5	4
Philippines	1	2	1	1	3
Australia	---	1	---	1	2
Guatemala	1	2	1	1	2
Other countries	7	9	9	21	8
Live plants for planting, n.e.s.	349	329	492	492	690
Canada	74	74	192	232	371
Netherlands	186	166	185	175	157
Japan	73	82	82	53	114
Guatemala	---	2	6	6	16
Honduras	4	1	5	16	16
United Kingdom	5	1	1	3	6
West Germany	2	1	11	1	2
Belgium-Luxembourg	2	1	4	3	2
Other countries	3	1	6	3	6
Flowers, cut, fresh	285	318	548	941	1,705
Canada	26	11	32	245	638
Ecuador	61	79	183	257	337
Colombia	12	34	67	74	291
Australia	121	132	149	163	170
Netherlands	13	10	27	89	169
France	19	15	31	38	31
Guatemala	---	1/	4	25	21
Costa Rica	12	3	23	12	14
Mexico	1	1/	---	10	12
United Kingdom	---	6	1	2	9
Brazil	---	---	---	1	5
Bermuda	7	3	1	3	2
Panama	1	2	2	2	1
Israel	---	1/	6	---	1
Italy	2	2	1	5	1
Sweden	---	6	10	7	1
South Africa	8	13	1	---	---
Other countries	2	2	10	8	2

1/ Less than $500.

Table 6.--U.S. exports of nursery and greenhouse stock, by countries, fiscal years 1966-70

Commodity and country	1965/66	1966/67	1967/68	1968/69	1969/70
	-- 1,000 dollars --				
Total	9,273	10,597	10,265	10,364	8,285
Canada	4,964	5,173	5,256	4,959	4,033
Mexico	1,105	1,398	1,271	1,706	1,226
Netherlands	523	769	765	603	534
West Germany	663	774	651	540	421
Bahamas	475	528	517	544	412
United Kingdom	290	364	338	299	230
Colombia	37	52	54	95	211
Italy	166	262	289	281	199
Venezuela	67	70	99	106	130
Sweden	146	174	75	46	123
Australia	54	56	88	98	88
Japan	118	140	136	93	86
Bermuda	86	60	76	197	67
South Africa	58	45	38	50	60
France	56	117	66	73	43
Guatemala	25	8	23	30	38
Norway	12	26	46	53	36
Belgium-Luxembourg	53	41	25	44	31
Iran	6	4	3	5	24
Jamaica	36	28	27	44	24
Switzerland	42	45	63	47	23
New Zealand	13	16	25	23	26
Costa Rica	32	81	84	16	21
Brazil	---	6	3	4	19
Spain	6	20	15	17	17
Other countries	240	340	232	391	189
Bulbs, corms, roots, pips, and tubers	1,700	2,201	1,981	1,664	1,137
Netherlands	419	664	673	522	420
Canada	603	621	549	456	228
United Kingdom	248	317	273	255	195
West Germany	59	135	76	77	68
Italy	39	67	85	69	52
South Africa	19	28	26	29	32
France	19	38	22	28	25
New Zealand	13	16	16	21	22
Colombia	9	41	41	55	17
Japan	13	14	9	15	15
Jamaica	4	13	10	9	6
Mexico	54	51	8	22	6
Belgium-Luxembourg	9	14	6	14	6
Denmark	14	14	13	12	6
Switzerland	22	28	33	23	5
Guatemala	1/	1	5	5	4
Venezuela	7	7	5	1	2
Bahamas	16	8	3	6	2
Australia	10	5	4	7	2
Bermuda	25	5	1	---	1
Sweden	29	25	27	7	1
Costa Rica	32	39	69	9	---
Dominican Republic	4	18	3	1/	---
Other countries	33	32	24	22	22
Cut flowers and buds	1,713	1,808	1,762	2,051	1,126
Canada	1,226	1,163	1,190	1,387	757

Continued--

Table 6.--U.S. exports of nursery and greenhouse stock, by countries, fiscal years 1966-70--Continued

Commodity and country	1965/66	1966/67	1967/68	1968/69	1969/70
	-- 1,000 dollars --				
Cut flowers and buds--Continued:					
Bermuda	40	41	66	191	64
Bahamas	57	149	100	127	60
Italy	17	78	98	92	54
Sweden	107	141	47	26	42
West Germany	113	60	91	82	38
Australia	2	2	12	31	27
Japan	3	23	39	18	19
Mexico	58	47	30	26	15
South Africa	1	1/	1	3	11
Iran	---	---	---	---	10
Venezuela	4	1	11	1	7
Jamaica	28	3	3	15	5
Netherlands	3	3	1	2	2
Switzerland	6	5	11	9	1
Haiti	1	3	3	4	1
Netherlands Antilles	27	45	33	5	---
Norway	1/	7	13	9	---
France	4	5	3	4	---
Other countries	16	32	10	19	13
Foliage, shrubs, bushes, etc.	663	833	846	869	680
Canada	337	293	357	279	242
West Germany	128	171	170	131	135
Mexico	127	259	157	313	90
Venezuela	12	17	42	38	65
Australia	14	8	30	25	42
Bahamas	26	42	34	47	25
Italy	5	10	10	8	19
Costa Rica	---	1	---	3	13
Belgium-Luxembourg	2	---	---	1	12
United Kingdom	3	1/	4	---	7
Netherlands Antilles	2	3	1	16	6
Japan	---	9	28	2	2
Other countries	7	20	13	6	22
Herbaceous plants, etc.	2,727	2,450	2,487	2,542	2,233
Canada	1,467	1,272	1,363	1,178	1,073
Mexico	760	674	720	863	854
Netherlands	43	20	36	42	71
West Germany	132	117	111	92	53
Bahamas	114	98	60	87	50
Norway	9	19	33	44	36
France	9	29	20	21	7
Ecuador	1	1	3	7	7
Colombia	27	1	2	12	7
Italy	43	56	21	24	7
United Kingdom	8	11	20	19	6
Spain	4	19	5	10	5
Canary Islands	2	2	5	27	5
Belgium-Luxembourg	13	14	7	22	4
Netherlands Antilles	1	3	4	6	4
Guatemala	5	2	3	2	3
El Salvador	3	2	3	1	3
Bermuda	15	10	8	5	2
Nicaragua	1	2	19	21	---

Continued--

Table 6.--U.S. exports of nursery and greenhouse stock, by countries, fiscal years 1966-70--Continued

Commodity and country	1965/66	1966/67	1967/68	1968/69	1969/70
	-- 1,000 dollars --				
Herbaceous plants, etc.--Continued:					
Costa Rica	---	23	13	2	---
Denmark	13	5	2	11	---
Japan	4	4	2	5	---
Other countries	53	66	27	41	36
Rose plants and rose stock	488	926	633	687	871
Canada	438	709	588	630	813
Mexico	7	178	11	15	25
Guatemala	4	1	8	18	10
Bahamas	8	6	6	5	6
Colombia	---	1	---	2	4
Venezuela	---	---	3	1	4
El Salvador	3	2	2	3	---
Japan	18	4	---	---	---
Other countries	10	25	15	13	9
Other nursery stock	1,982	2,379	2,556	2,551	2,238
Canada	893	1,115	1,209	1,029	920
Bahamas	254	225	314	272	269
Mexico	99	189	345	467	236
Colombia	1	9	9	26	183
West Germany	230	291	203	154	127
Sweden	9	8	1	13	79
Italy	62	51	73	88	68
Venezuela	42	45	38	53	52
Japan	80	86	58	53	50
Netherlands	55	72	55	36	40
United Kingdom	28	31	39	23	22
Switzerland	9	12	12	14	18
Guatemala	15	4	6	3	17
Australia	27	40	41	35	17
Iran	---	4	3	5	13
Jamaica	2	8	10	15	13
South Africa	23	17	11	15	11
Brazil	---	6	3	4	11
Belgium-Luxembourg	23	10	11	7	9
France	22	37	21	20	8
Denmark	27	40	25	14	7
Spain	---	---	8	3	6
Malaysia	12	5	8	9	4
New Zealand	1/	---	9	2	4
Nicaragua	---	---	---	125	---
Singapore	4	15	8	4	---
Other countries	65	59	36	62	54

1/ Less than $500.